

June 2025

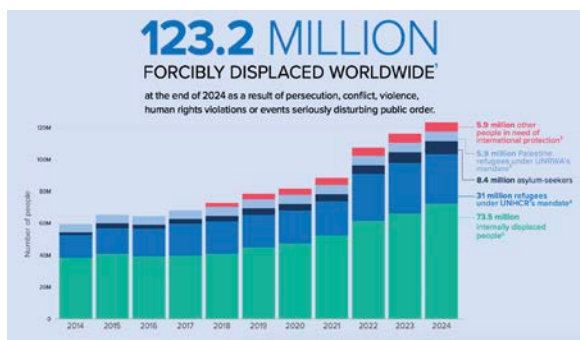
# country report

Multilateral Dialogue Geneva

## Ten key insights from UNHCR's 2025 global trends report

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On 12 June 2025, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presented its new [global trends report](#). Ten key findings from the report:



UNHCR Global Trends Report 2025, p. 2

**1. 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual increase in number of people forcibly displaced:** A total of 123.2 million people were forcibly displaced at the end of 2024 which constitutes an increase of 6% (7 million people) compared to the end of 2023. While yet another rise, it is less steep than in the previous years. By end-April 2025 the total number has even fallen slightly to 122,1 million. An estimated 40% of all displaced in 2024 were children (while accounting for 29% of the world's population), 50% were women and girls. Out of all forcibly displaced in 2024, the proportion of internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to conflict and violence rose to 73.5 million, which constitutes an increase of 10% within one year<sup>1</sup>. 31 million were refugees

under the UNHCR mandate, in addition to 5,9 million refugees under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), and 5.9 million were in need of international protection<sup>2</sup> which brings the global refugee population to 42.7 million, a slight decrease of 1% compared to the previous year. This constitutes the first year-on-year decline since 2011. In the last decade, however, the number has more than doubled. 8.4 million people were asylum seekers and 4.4 million were stateless in 2024<sup>3</sup>.

**2. Further escalating conflicts behind new displacement:** More than one third of all forcibly displaced people worldwide were Sudanese (14,3 million), Syrians (13,5 million), Afghans (10,3 million) and Ukrainians (8,8 million). For yet another year, the war in Sudan has triggered the world's largest displacement crisis with 14,3 million Sudanese displaced at end-2024 (+3,5 million) which is around one-third of the total population. In addition, more than half of the population is currently facing crisis level of hunger (IPC 3 and above). Widening famine causes one of the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. More than 8 million people experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC4) and more than 637'000 people catastrophic hunger (IPC5). Famine was

<sup>1</sup> More information on the internally displaced people can be found in the [2025 Global Report on Internal Displacement](#).

<sup>2</sup> This category was introduced in mid-2022 and refers to people who are outside of their country or territory of origin because they have been displaced across international borders, who have not been reported under other categories (asylum-seekers, refugees, people in refugee-like situations) but who likely need international protection. It includes Venezuelans who were

previously listed separately, but who did not officially apply for asylum but are in need of international protection under the criteria set out in the 1984 Cartagena Declaration, a regional agreement that is broader in scope than the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees.

<sup>3</sup> A graphic illustration of the latest figures can be found in our [Map of the Month June 2025](#).

confirmed in five areas and 17 are at risk of famine<sup>4</sup>.

The overall increase in numbers is also due to the escalating conflicts in Myanmar (3,6 million IDPs, 1,5 million refugees and asylum seekers); in Haiti where the number of displaced tripled within a year (from 313,900 to over 1 million); in Gaza where 90% of the population or 2 million people have been displaced multiple times; in Lebanon where nearly 1 million people have been displaced at the height of the crisis, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where 7,4 million people were displaced at end-2024; in the Sahel region or in Ukraine where an additional 740,000 people have been displaced on top of the 3,7 million people that remained internally displaced by end-2024.

**3. Countries of origin in 2024:** Around 69% of all refugees under UNHCR mandate that crossed an international border and people in need of international protection originated from just five countries: Venezuela (6,2 million, +2%), Syria (6 million, -6%), Afghanistan (5,8 million, -10%), Ukraine (5 million) and South Sudan (2,3 million), followed by Sudan (2,1 million, +40%), Myanmar (1,3 million), DR-Congo (1 million), Somalia (894.000), and the Central African Republic (693.488). A total of 85% originated from these 10 countries, a slight decrease from the previous year. This is due to numbers lowering from Afghanistan, Syria and Ukraine while the number of Sudanese refugees increased by nearly 600.000.

**4. Internal displacement at all time-high:** With around 60% of all people who were forced to flee in 2024 (73,5 million out of 123,3 million), people who were internally displaced due to conflict and violence constituted the vast majority. This is an increase of 6,3 million people from the previous year, mainly due to intensified conflicts in Sudan, Myanmar, Haiti and Colombia. The highest numbers were

recorded in Sudan (11,6 million, +2,5 million or 28%), which became the largest internal displacement situation globally, followed by Syria (7.4 million), and Colombia (7,2 million), the DRC (6,9 million, +11%), Yemen (4,8 million, +6%), Somalia, Ukraine, Myanmar, Nigeria and Afghanistan. In addition, 45,8 million people were displaced within their own country due to disasters with 9,8 million remaining displaced at the end of the year, most of them in low- and middle-income countries. This constitutes an increase of 29% compared to end-2023.

**5. The main host countries in 2024:** With 67%, most people fleeing conflict or persecution were seeking refuge in a country neighbouring their own. In absolute terms, the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted the largest refugee population (3,5 million people) followed by Türkiye (2,9 million), Colombia (2,8 million), Germany (2,7 million) and Uganda (1,8 million). Among the top ten were additionally Pakistan, Chad, Peru, Poland, Ethiopia and Bangladesh (in this order). In total, there were 7.8 million refugees<sup>5</sup> in the EU at the end of 2024 of which Germany hosted the most, followed by Poland, France and Spain. Worldwide, Germany hosts around 7,4% of the world's refugees and people in need of international protection while being the only country which does not share a border with a major country of origin.

**6. Regional differences, unequal distribution remains:** The imbalance in the distribution of refugees also remained throughout 2024 with a small number of countries shouldering most of the responsibility. 73% of the world's refugee population was hosted by low- and middle-income countries, however, low-income countries who account for 0,6% of the global domestic product (GDP) hosted 19% of all refugees alone. High income countries in comparison, who accounted for 64% of the global GDP hosted 27% of refugees at end-2024.

<sup>4</sup> See the latest analysis from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) on Sudan [here](#) and the latest data from the World Food Program (WFP) [here](#).

<sup>5</sup> With asylum seekers the number stood at 8,9 million.

**7. Asylum seekers:** 3.1 million new individual asylum applications were registered in 2024 in addition to 372,200 repeat or appeal applications which brings the total to 3,4 million applications who were registered worldwide. More than half of them were received in just four countries: the USA (729,100), Egypt (433,900), Germany (229,800) and Canada (174,000), followed by Spain (167,400), Italy, France and the UK. Most applicants came from Sudan, Venezuela, Syria, Colombia and Afghanistan<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, 8.4 million asylum seekers were waiting for a decision which is an increase of 22% compared to last year and the highest number ever recorded. Pending cases have risen for the eighth consecutive year with new individual applications outpacing substantive decisions, reflecting the continued rise of forced displacement globally.

**8. Ways and means to address the refugee crisis have been amplified in 2024 while concerns about protection risks and sustainability remain:** From returns over resettlement to naturalization, all response mechanisms or “solutions” as the UNHCR terms it, increased during the past year.

**Returns** of refugees and IDPs saw a year-on-year increase of 60%. Overall, 8,2 million IDPs returned, the second highest total ever recorded. Most of them returned within Ethiopia, DR-Congo, Lebanon, Ukraine and Syria. Moreover, 1,6 million refugees returned to their country of origin (92% of them to Afghanistan, Syria, South Sudan and Ukraine alone), the highest number in more than two decades.

However, especially returns to Afghanistan were oftentimes not voluntary, safe and dignified since especially Iran and Pakistan enacted new policies removing undocumented foreigners including through deportation.

As one of the largest forced displacement situations in the world, the fall of the Assad

government has generated renewed hope. By mid-June 2025 more than 2 million Syrians have returned since December. This includes circa 600,000 Syrians (out of 6,1 million refugees and asylum seekers abroad) who returned from abroad and around 1,5 million (out of 7,4 million) IDPs who have returned within Syria. The UNHCR estimates that a total of 1,5 million people from abroad and around 2 million IDPs may return by the end of 2025, with international support to create an environment for sustainable returns remaining paramount<sup>7</sup>. While accounting for only 8% of the total need, **resettlement** also saw an increase of 19% compared to the previous year, the highest number for more than 40 years (188,800 refugees out of 2,4 million in need). Four countries accounted for 94% of all arrivals, namely the USA, Canada, Australia and Germany. For 2025 the UNHCR estimates that more than 2,9 million people (+20%) will be in need of resettlement<sup>8</sup>.

In terms of **naturalization**, 26 countries reported on granting permanent residency or citizenship to around 88,900 refugees during the past year. Due to limited reporting, the real figure stands most likely much higher.

Positive developments were also reported for stateless people with those acquiring citizenship in 32 countries rising by 47% to 47,200 people (ca. 1% of the 4,4 million).

**9. Search for peace imperative:** To ensure that returns are sustainable and lasting, so that people do not fall into the cycle of return, renewed displacement and conflict, the High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi urged heads of states and government to place the search for peace at the centre of all efforts.

**10. Massive funding cuts, a system at a breaking point:** The UNHCR estimates the financial needs for 2025 at 10.6 billion US dollars. Out of this, only 22% have been covered until end-May 2024. Due to this massive funding shortfall and

<sup>6</sup> More on new asylum applications worldwide in 2024 can be found in our [Map of the Month June 2025](#).

<sup>7</sup> See more [here](#).

<sup>8</sup> More [here](#).

financial uncertainty caused by the US foreign aid freeze, UNHCR is forced to reduce the scale of its operations and cut global staffing costs by 30% which implies discontinuing more than 3500 permanent staff posts, terminating hundreds of temporary positions and downsizing or closing several offices worldwide. Traditionally, the organisation relied heavily on US funding which made up around 40% of the contributions received. Until end-May, the US remains the most important financial supporter (ca. 392 million USD, ca. 20% of the total), followed by the European Commission (12 %), Sweden (6 %), Norway (5,8 %), Denmark (5 %), Germany (4,5 %), Canada and the Netherlands (4,3% each). 20 EU member states provided 28.6% of the funding, together with the European Commission even 40.5%. All other state donors together (the US excluded) covered more than half of this, around 23.2%. Private donors contributed 13% so far<sup>9</sup>. In the eyes of the High Commissioner, it is “not just a funding shortfall – it is a crisis of responsibility.<sup>10</sup>” According to him, lost futures, suffering and further instability will be the cost of inaction.

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<sup>9</sup> More [here](#). Find more in our [Map of the Month June 2025](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [here](#).